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## LITERATURE OF THE DAY.

### MISTAKES IN WRITING HISTORY.

We have an unfortunate habit of distributing historical affairs under reigns. Even where monarchy is extremely powerful, it is seldom that an age ought to be called after a monarch. It would be better not to speak even of the "Siecle de Louis XIV." The English monarchs of the eighteenth century were by no means the *fainéants* they are sometimes made to appear; still it is absurd to represent them as determining the character of their age. The first step in arranging and dividing any period of English history is to get rid of such useless assumptions as that of Queen Anne, reign of George I., reign of George II. In the place of these we must study to put divisions founded upon some real stage of progress in the national life. We must look onward not from King to King, but from great event to great event. And in order to do this we must estimate events, measure their greatness, a thing which cannot be done without considering and analyzing them closely. When with respect to any event we have satisfied ourselves that it deserves to rank among the leading events of the national history, the next step is to put it in connection with its causes. In this way each event takes the character of a development, and each development of this kind forms a chapter in the national history, a chapter which will get its name from the event. As a plain example of this principle, take the reign of George III. What can be more absurd, than to treat those sixty years as constituting one period, simply because one man was King during the whole of them? What, then, are we to substitute for the King as a principle of division? Evidently great events. One part of the reign will make a chapter by itself as the period of the loss of America, another as that of the struggle with the French Revolution. But in a national history there are larger as well as smaller divisions. Besides chapters, there are, as it were, books or parts. This is because the great events, when examined closely, are seen to be connected with each other; those which are chronologically nearest to each other are seen to be similar; they fall into groups, each of which may be regarded as a single complex event, and the complex events give their names to the parts, as the simpler events give their names to the separate chapters, of the history.—*Prof. Seeley, in Macmillan's Magazine.*

### A GENTLEMANLY MECHANIC.

A horse car was proceeding up Shawmut avenue on Saturday afternoon, and among its freight of precious human lives, it bore six young men, all irreproachably dressed, and, to their own minds, at least, of engaging personal appearance. Bracketed up in a corner, also, was a man whose linen and complexion gave color to the opinion that he was engaged in the glass-ering trade, and whose features indicated that he was of Hibernian extraction. The car was crowded and bumped along slowly, and presently there entered a young woman of considerable charm of features, and looked about for a seat. Instantly the plasterer and the six elaborately adorned young men got up and in one breath tendered her the choice of seven separate and distinct seats. She accepted that which was offered by one of the gilded youths, whereupon the plasterer and the five remaining young men sat down again. Presently a colored woman with a big bundle came in and hung on to a strap, while the young men reclined in their respective positions, as if on enchanted ground. Thereupon the plasterer, after looking around to see that nobody else arose, got up and said:

"Please to take this seat, mum. I offered it to the young lady over yander when she got in, but she tuk one look at them byes alongside o' me to her. So you take this, for begorra. If I should kape it from yez after offerin' it to the other leddy the folks abound the car moight think I was a masher, an' I've got a character to sustain."

And thus speaking, he took his old clothes and a kit of tools that he fished up from under the seat to the front platform, and all the youths looked out at him and gazed at one another, and knew not what to say, and there was silence in that car for the space of a block and a half.—*Boston Journal.*

### CONSUMPTION OF CHURCHES.

New York's total church expenses foot up about six million five hundred thousand dollars each year. The figures include the pay of pastors, the building fund, the cost of running the various churches and the outlay for missions and all benevolent purposes. The Roman Catholics lead the list. They have some seventy-five churches, and their total annual outlay is estimated at two millions two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, half of which goes in charity. The Episcopalians come next. They have seventy-nine churches and chapels, with twenty-five thousand five hundred communicants. Their outlay is one million one hundred and fifty thousand dollars—six hundred thousand dollars for church expenses, and five hundred and fifty thousand dollars for benevolent purposes. After the Episcopalians come the Presbyterians, with sixty churches, having a membership of twenty-one thousand five hundred, and an expense of seven hundred and ninety-five thousand dollars, something over half of which is for "church purposes." The Methodists have sixty-five churches, but their membership is only thirteen thousand three hundred, and their total expenses are set down at two hundred and forty-three thousand dollars—two hundred thousand dollars being for church purposes. The Baptists, with thirty-six churches and a membership of twelve thousand seven hundred, expend nearly one hundred thousand dollars more than the Methodists, their entire outlay being three hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars. The Dutch Reformed and the Lutheran combined are forty-one churches, with a membership of sixteen thousand, and their expenses foot up three hundred and sixty-three thousand dollars. The Congregationalists have only six churches, with two thousand four hundred members, and a total expense list of ninety-six thousand dollars. Next come the Jews, and they make a very good showing. They have nineteen tabernacles, with a declared membership of three thousand (the regular attendance, though, is at least four times that number) and an expense of over three hundred thousand dollars.—*Correspondence Buffalo Courier.*

### THE REALISM OF AN ACTOR'S LIFE.

The life of an actor is by no means the honeycombed affair that the silly school boys and romantic school girls think, is the opinion aired by "Joe" Howard in the Chicago *News*. Male and female, they struggle against the tide, forced to appear at their best, regardless of headache, stomachache or heartache. What a comical situation it must be for an impecunious actor, fearfully hard up, his salary anticipated, his future even mortgaged, and he cast in the role of a banker, playing a prince, counterfeiting a potentate. But no romance-devised of its the wildest imagination can equal the sober facts and the dull realities of the stage itself. One of the brightest, merriest, smartest women I ever knew, whose line is that of the laughing comedienne, was compelled, by necessity and the carelessness of a manager, to provide an understudy, to appear in the role of a role of a rollicking, laughing, high-dadjy widow the very night on which her bro her died in her arms, for the two nights following, and the matinee of the week; this with his dead body reposing in the coffin, she on the stage creating streams of laughter, the body at home surrounded by weeping mourners. I don't know whether the young people of to-day read Dickens or not, but if they want to find a pretty picture of the every-day life of the average actor, man or woman, let them read that beautiful story of the widow and his dying baby. That may have been a fancy sketch, but it was based on Dickens' knowledge of the realisms behind the ideal. All is not gold that glitters on the stage, and "property fowls," as Mrs. Jarvis remarks, do not make a very satisfactory meal.

### FORTUNE-TELLING CANARIES.

From an insignificant beginning the trade in fortune-telling canaries carried on by Italian girls in London has assumed almost incredible dimensions. If the fortune-telling began and ended here, no great harm would be done; but with the supply the appetite increases, and the fortune-tellers are branching out into new lines, and worming their way into thousands of families. All men of the world know what this means. Here is the "Planet of the fortune for a lady," which has accidentally come into our possession: "You have been betrayed by a person whom you never suspected. You have something on your mind that troubles you, but the whole will come out to your satisfaction. You have to go through many grievances and adversities; but do not wonder at it. Time changes all. You will be in more luck than before. You have much that troubles you, but do not get excited about it; you will succeed and prosper before long. You will receive news which will put you in a good position, and will generally enjoy an future great fortune, and live to be eighty-five years old." Nice stuff this for an innocent girl to hide away among her secret treasures, and devoutly believe in.

### CAPTAIN AS A LUNATIC.

A Brattleboro, Vermont, asylum attache was recently responsible for an amusing case of mistaken identity. A stranger was espied climbing the bank not far from the institution, who was thought to be an escaped patient, and some of the attendants were sent in hot pursuit. Following him by a circuitous route, they at last overtook their man as he had just sat down to dine with one of the most respectable families in the village. After the man had been unceremoniously collared, and was being hustled to the door, the host, with difficulty succeeded in explaining to his surprise that their prisoner was none other than her brother, who was spending a short vacation with the family.

### NEW MARKET.

A writer, describing Newmarket fifty years ago, says: "Its staple trade is blood horses; its inhabitants, for the most part, jockeys and gamblers; its language that of Tattersalls; its business an endless succession of matches on the race course, in the cock pit, the tennis court, on the billiard table or the card table. About three hundred horses are trained every year. From two thousand five hundred dollars to ten thousand dollars of a common price. Now and again twenty thousand dollars is given. Nearly every one in the town bets more or less. Even the children learn to lay the pedigrees of horses, the long odds, and the merits of jockeys." It is much the same to-day.

Mr. Brassey, wife of the hero of "The Ride to Khiva," is prostrate with typhoid fever at Hastings. Her son is in a critical condition.

There are three things a wise man will not trust—the wind, the sunshine of an April day, and a woman's plighted faith.—*Sunday.*